

REMARKS

Continued examination is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter. In particular, the Examiner indicated that claims 1-31 and 34-37 are allowable in view of the cited prior art.

Disposition of Claims

Claims 1-37 are pending in the instant application. However, claims 17-24 have been withdrawn from consideration based on the Applicants' provisional election of these claims in response to the restriction requirement applied by the Examiner in his Office Action dated July 2, 2003, while claims 32 and 33 have been previously cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Claim Amendments

The Applicants have amended claims 4, 11, 12, 27, 31, 34 and 36 to better distinctly claim what the Applicants consider their invention. In particular, the Applicants have amended dependent claim 4 to replace the specific pressure value with the limitation that the pressure must "overcome the spring force applied by said spring means" in order to open the first and second check valves. In addition, dependent claim 11 was amended to recite that the main valve is placed in a position "other than the open position", while dependent claim 12 recites that the vent passageway is "adapted" to smooth out any random pressure surges. Similarly, dependent claim 27 was amended to recite that the space defined between the first and second check

valves is "adapted" to dampen momentary pressure surges. Claim 31 has been amended to add the term "and" before the last paragraph of the claim. Finally, dependent claims 34 and 36 were amended to recite that a "first valve or second valve" rather than a second valve. The Applicants aver that no new matter has been introduced by virtue of these amendments to the dependent claims.

Based on the foregoing amendments, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner indicate the allowance of claims 1-31 and 34-37.

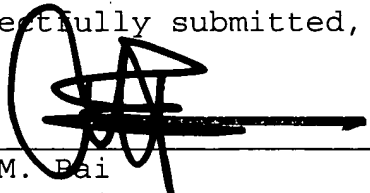
CONCLUSION

By the present response, the Applicants have made amendments to the claims of the instant application in order to more distinctly claim what the Applicants consider as their invention. Accordingly, the application is believed to be in a condition for allowance and expeditious notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney collect if he has any questions related to the Applicants' remarks and/or amendments.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date


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